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2000

## Dance Senior Thesis

Amy Farnsley

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**Amy Farnsley**

**Senior Thesis**

**Fall 2000**

# Calendar

2000

# August

2000

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 <i>my Birthday</i>	18	19
20	21 <i>move back to L.A.</i>	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 <i>School Begins - First day of classes</i>	29	30	31		



2000

# September

2000

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

					meeting w/ dady 12:00	1	2
3	4 Labor Day-Holiday NO Classes	5 Dance Auditions 6:30-9	6	7 Dance Auditions 6:30-9	8	9	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
17	18 8:00am meeting Lion's Den	19	20	21	22	23	
24 studio reserved 4:30-6	25	26	27 10am meeting w/Scott	28	29	30	

2000

October

2000

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 <i>Loretta Mentoring @ 6-7:30 Cancelled</i>	11	12 <i>Dance &amp; Mexico performance @ CONVO</i>	13	14
15 <i>Studio 6:30-7</i>	16	17 <i>Loretta @ 6-7</i>	18	19	20 <i>← HOME</i>	21
22 <i>Holiday</i>	23 <i>Holiday</i>	24 <i>Return to LA</i>	25	26	27	28
29 <i>Studio 10:30-12:30</i>	30 <i>Halloween</i>	31				

2000

November

2000

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Studio 6-7:30	8	9 Studio 6-7:30	10 Meeting w/ Andy 12:00	11
12 Studio 1-3	13	14 Meeting w/ Andy 3:00 Studio 6-7:30	15	16 Studio 6-7:30 (Loretta)	17	18
19 Studio 1-3	20 Student Works showing (in progress) 7-9	21 Meeting @ 3:00 w/	22	23 Thanksgiving	24 Choreograph Holiday 9-10 <sup>30</sup>	25
26 →	27	28 Studio 6-7 magnet project	29 Mrkt + project	30 Studio 6-7:30		

← HOME →

2000

# December

2000

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

					1	2
Studio 1-3	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Studio 6-7 Luncheon	Faculty Works Showing (in progress) 7-9 Studio 8-10	Christmas Showing 4pm Sr. Thesis showing @ 5:10		9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Final exams 8:00 kines 7:00 dance & Mexico	Final exams 11:00 Regent	Final exams 2:00 ballet 4:30 Mkt	Final exams 11:00 Modern	Final exams Sr. Thesis due beg 5:00	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
HOME			grades due		Christmas break begins	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Christmas					



# My Journal

①

8/29/00

Before doing anything else in this journal I decide to reflect back on why I choose the song I did.

I first heard the song "Arms Wide Open" while I was driving in my car. In an instant I got goose pimples + chills. I didn't really pay any attention to the song but, I soon realized after hearing it on the radio often that this song was special. Everytime I heard the song it stirred up feelings + emotions in me. I never knew why but, I knew I had to have the song. I think the musicality + dynamics of the song is what

(2)

lured me in. I only slightly paid attention to the words so, it had to be something else that affected me.

After time passed I finally found out the name of the band so, immediately ran out & bought the C/D. When I finally took the time to sit down & listen to the lyrics I was stunned. The lyrics provoked emotion & were extremely powerful. With all the feelings & emotions finally settling in I realized I had to choreograph a dance to it. What better opportunity then for my senior thesis.

Weeks later I found out one of my best friends was

③

pregenant. wow!!!  
That was a huge  
Shock. I didn't know  
how to react. I was  
happy for her yet  
extremely worried  
cause she was only 22  
& had her whole life  
ahead of her. When I  
sat back & absorbed  
all the information I  
encountered I noticed  
a connection to the  
song.

In the song the  
lead singer is describing  
his emotions about  
becoming a father &  
his feelings of  
well, my ~~my~~ friend  
Eileen was about  
to encounter similar  
feelings. At that  
moment I ~~never~~ knew  
my chance was next  
to be.



(A)

9/1/00

Today I met with  
Dudy to discuss  
my thesis. To my  
excitement my  
dance is good to  
go. We also talked  
about everything my  
thesis entails. I  
got a little overwhelmed  
because I <sup>have</sup> little time  
to do ~~so~~ so much.  
She sent me home  
with a previous student's  
senior thesis to give  
me idea of how to  
proceed.

I went home &  
began to read. I  
realized that if  
I just take it one  
step at a time &  
break it up into  
smaller projects I will do  
fine. Nothing is impossible  
once you put your  
mind to it.

(5)

9/5/00

Today I decided to sit down + listen to the song. It was almost like meditation. I cleared my mind + let the music fill my head. I wanted to absorb the music + take note of how I feel during certain parts of the music. Sometimes the music motivated me + sometimes the lyrics did.

What amazed me is that the song still had the same effect on my body as it did the first time I heard it. With that in mind I closed my eyes + visualized myself dancing to the song. I took mental notes of certain moves I wanted to

(6)

use. I am now  
on my ~~new~~ way  
to creating a  
beautiful dance.  
# I feel good about  
what I plan to  
do & am extremely  
excited to see how  
my dance turns out.

(7)

9/9/00

I just got off the phone w/ my friend Eileen. She is so strong or seems to be. I proposed the idea of using her as symbol for my dance. She agreed. I am not going use her as the primary means of emotion but, as an extra bonus. I want use her experience & emotions to interpret my dance. What I realized is that if I base my dance on her it won't be completely mine & I may not be able to express her feelings through my body cause I am not going through it. I want this dance to be completely me & I ~~also~~ want to feel it throughout my body. Eileen will

(8)

be my inspiration.  
My dance is going  
to focus on emotions.  
I hope I express the  
powerful emotion the  
song invokes to my  
audience.

(9)

9/10/00

Since, I went to sleep with my dance on my mind & ~~the~~ dreamt about it. It was an amazing dream. The only thing that perplexed me was the girl who was dancing had no real distincted face. She had long brown hair & was tall. Actually she had nice legs & a good frame. She had long beautiful <sup>leg</sup> extensions & could turn for ever. I thought the girl was me but, I am not so sure. She wore a medium length white ~~chiffon~~ chiffon slip dress that flowed beautifully. She danced in slow motion & it seemed as if the world stopped so she could dance.

(10)

9/12/00

Today I created a count sheet. It demonstrates musical changes and transitions. It also ~~also~~ helps me break down a dance into specific ~~sections~~ sections. I started to think of how I wanted to start the dance. I know for sure I want to start in the upstage left corner. I chose this because it is more subtle. I think center stage would be too harsh for the music. The music is very soft & slight & I feel being somewhat hidden will have the best effect. The singers lyrics express insecurity & uncertainty. For me during times like this

(11)

I want to be left alone.  
So, the corner symbolizes  
self reflection +  
taking oneself out of  
the ~~area~~ big picture to  
reflect on what is  
happening. The softness  
of the music gives a  
very lyrical / simple  
movement feel. I  
think I will use  
minimal movement  
in the beginning  
maybe some simple  
gestures or something.



(2)

9/17/00

I started to choreograph today. I had a hard time getting motivated. It's easy to procrastinate when you are working by yourself. I started to make progress but, I got stuck again at the beginning. I can't decide if I want to start standing up or sitting on the floor. The floor seems more vulnerable & scared where standing ~~may~~ might <sup>or</sup> have ~~not~~ that effect. But, I have good gestures standing that I am not sure will read well sitting down. I got so stuck that I decide to take a break. I watched dance

(13)

sequences from my  
favorite dance **MOVIES**  
for inspiration. With  
roommate + visitor  
distraction I didn't  
get anything done.  
Luckily I have a huge  
block of time tomorrow  
w/ out any roommate  
distraction.

(14)

9/18/00

I got inspired today  
so, I tried choreographing.  
well, I got at least  
a minute done. When  
I tried writing it down  
to counts I realized I  
couldn't. If I danced  
on the counts my  
movements would not  
flow they I ~~if~~ wished  
or my body wanted  
to do. For once in my  
life I just danced  
w/out the structure  
of counts. Luckily I  
am doing a solo  
cause I would not be  
able to teach it to  
someone else. Eventually  
I had to stop cause  
I ~~keep~~ kept getting  
hung up on the  
words & not the  
emotions the music  
provoked.

(15)

9/19/00

I went to the 8:00 AM meeting. Luckily coffee was available cause I needed a pick me up. I forgot that I talked to Eileen yesterday. She was extremely frustrated w/ the ~~the~~ babies father & that fueled my fire to choreograph. I put myself in her shoes. How would I feel if I was going thru what she is.

Back to the meeting it was interesting hearing about all the different interpretations of Senior Thesis people are doing. Most of the specifics didn't apply to me cause I am condensing it into a semester. I was excited to know that some of

(16)

paper is pseudo done.  
Andy reminded me  
of the What is Dance?  
paper I wrote in to  
Dance is Human. I  
am going to ~~rework~~  
look over that paper  
& revise. That makes  
me feel a little less  
stressed.

Today I also  
scheduled rehearsal  
time on ~~Wed~~ Sun  
from 4:30-6. Visiting the  
studio will be beneficial  
to seeing what I have  
done & revising &  
creating new stuff.

Tomorrow I am  
scheduling an Appt  
w/ Scott to discuss  
the business side of  
my Senior Thesis.

(17)

9/20

I briefly met with Scott to discuss my intention. What I need to focus on is how to make dance intention less intrapersonal & more interpersonal. The audience needs to connect some how to the dance not just myself only. This reminds me of a quote one of my dance teachers said, "You need to share the gift, keeping to yourself would be selfish." Not only that but, I feel the audience will get bored unless they have some sort of connection to the dance. Well, I am supposed to take the next week & find my specific intention. Scott & I scheduled another meeting for next week.

(16)

9/24

Today I reserved a  
Studio from 4:30-6.  
I got frustrate for  
about the first 45 mins.  
Nothing was coming to  
me, when it did I  
couldn't decide where to  
put the combination of  
moves. I took Scott's  
suggestion & tried choreography  
w/ out the music & then  
put it to the music.  
I had more success with  
that approach. So, I  
did get some choreography  
done & revised some I  
had already. I am  
happy w/ what I  
have but, wished I  
could get more accomplished.  
I reserved the studio for  
next Sunday also so,  
hopefully I'll get more  
done.

(19)

9/27

I was supposed to meet w/ Scott but, I found it pointless cause I still haven't specified my intention, I assumed I would have time of some week to have some quiet thinking time.

Boy was I wrong. Homework piled up, my roommate got really sick, & I took care of her. I hope Scott is not mad. I guess I could of run ideas by him but, I didn't want to waste his time. One thought about my intention I had was... I wish for the audience to leave w/ some sort of feeling. Be it happy cause they were entertained or sad cause I stirred up some repressed feelings. I want my dance to leave a lasting impression.



20

10-1-00

well its 11:40pm  
on Sunday. & I just  
rearranged my dance.  
Before I went to bed  
I thought it would be  
a good idea for me to  
visualize my choreography  
so I did & realized  
I didn't like it any-  
more. I started re-thinking  
my choreography & putting  
it ~~to~~ different parts  
of the music. Much to  
my surprise I liked it  
better. I took the  
lyrical floor work &  
put it in the trash  
music & made it more  
accented. I am really  
pleased with my  
adjustments. I also  
got so motivated that  
I made up about 5  
more 8 counts. I am  
hoping that going to  
sleep ~~will~~ while I am  
still in dance mode

(21)

will be beneficial. My best choreography comes in my dreams. It's weird but ~~now~~ somehow my dream's dictate my dancing. It will be interesting to see what my imagination cooks up tonight.

School started to get more hectic with school work so, I have procrastinated on my dance which is bad. I only have 7 weeks to finish a perfect before my showing. During mid semester break I plan to finish my dance. A lot of mid big projects will be over & I have already reserved the studio back home. I talked to my old dance teacher today & scheduled some time for her to help me

(22)

with my piece. She  
is ~~very~~ ~~the~~ the woman  
I strive to be like  
so, this quality time  
together will be  
wonderful. ~~///~~



(24)

10-15-00

Today I went into the studio to choreograph. Instead of getting a lot choreographed I just clarified & cleaned up what was already done. I also got some ideas for how I want to start the dance. Thru my process I realized that I am having a very difficult time choreographing to the song. All these beautiful visions I had are not becoming reality. I can't figure out why. I am also struggling with an intention. I thought I knew what it was but, now I am questioning it. I guess I am just getting really frustrated. I caused my vision is not becoming a reality. Luckily, during mid-

(25)

Semester break I am going home + meeting with one of my old dance teachers. She is an inspiration to me so maybe I just need a little confidence from her. I have also reserved the studio so, I can choreograph in a setting that is comfortable + familiar. This might be just the thing I need to get myself back on track.

(26)

10-17-00

I just got home from my first coaching session with Loretta. It felt it was extremely successful and set me on the right track to continue. Going into it I was not thrilled with my choreography. I was not looking forward to this session because I did not feel good about my dance. It amazes me that Loretta could read exactly how I was feeling through my movements. I guess a dancer cannot hide their feelings when they dance. I was looking at this coaching session as a jumping off point. It was exactly that. Loretta helped/aided me in holding my choreography. It became something I was proud of. I also saw the potential our relationship has to be. I really feel I can learn a lot from her.

(27)

What I learned is that it is very difficult to choreograph a solo on yourself. I keep getting caught up between being the choreographer & being the performer. What I need to focus on is the performance side cause that is what the audience reacts to. I also learned that I need to clarify who I am in the piece. Am I taking character as the singer or the object the singer is singing about. I never thought of that aspect but, that will help me execute my intention better. On that subject, I don't see why we need an intention. I love to dance. I love to entertain. I have a hard time with the idea of making my



(28)

piece have an intention.  
I have inspiration  
for my piece. The  
song stirs up so many  
emotions in ~~my~~ me  
which wants my body  
to react. I guess my  
intention could be  
to stir up emotions  
in the audience. Thus  
they leave having  
stirred up emotions  
in them. I want to  
make a lasting impress  
At least now I have  
so idea of where I  
want to take my  
piece.

(29)

10-23-00

Well, I was supposed to choreograph today but, since I was at home I had many other important errands to do. I wish the break would have been 1 day longer so I could accomplish everything I needed to do in San Jose. To my pleasant surprise when I attended dance class at my old studio the teacher gave us the really beautiful lyrical combo routine. He was exactly what I needed to get inspired. I went home that night & visually choreographed some of my dance. I will be really ~~excited~~ excited if it turns out as beautiful as it is in my head.

(20)

10-29-00

As I approached the studio to choreograph I had a great feeling. The first great thing was that I decided on what version of the song I wanted to use.

I choose the newer version. It is about a minute shorter than the original. It does not have the exact dynamics I want but, I ~~felt~~ felt more inspired dancing to it. The is more focus on the lyrics that I find the strongest & I find myself more free when I dance to it.

The 2nd great thing was that I ~~was~~ accomplished alot. I got most of my dance choreographed. I left feeling a real sense of pride

in my dance. For the first time I feel attached to my dance. While I was in the studio I closed the curtains & just danced. I let all worries go & lived in the moment. It felt so good cause I am able to ~~give~~<sup>dance</sup> the passion I feel when I hear the song & hopefully that passion will effect the audience. I learned something about myself... I can choreograph & dance better when I can't see myself. When I look in the mirrors I worry to much about what I look like. When I can't see myself I just let lose & let ~~myself~~ my feel (innerself) lead me.

(32)

11-8-00

I am so frustrated with myself. I had another mentoring session. It was extremely helpful. The problem I face is internal and I can't figure out why. For some reason my performance level has not been up to par like it usually is. I can't figure what is wrong for some reason LHM is not my element. I think I am insecure with my dance ability at the moment. I felt so good about my dance before mentoring & now I feel not worthy after. The mentoring experience is wonderful + extremely helpful. I am just unhappy because the things

the (Luratta) has  
 pointed out are all  
 things I should of  
 known better. I think  
 part of the problem  
 is that I feel that I  
 have let down my  
 teachers at home. I  
 would be ashamed for  
 them to here some of  
 the simple things  
 my dancing is lacking.  
 Yet, I feel if they were  
 here to see me I would  
 my complete dance  
 self. Besides the  
 internal ~~struggle~~ struggle  
 my dance is coming  
 along. I am really  
 pleased w/ how it is  
 turning out. I still  
 have not thought of a  
 intention. I don't  
 know what I want the  
 audience to get from  
 my piece. Luratta  
 said I should stop  
 thinking & feel. But,

(24)

I am not sure I can express in words how I feel when I am dancing my piece. I talked to one of my friends & asked her to list off words describing emotion & ~~none~~ none of them clicked. I've never had to ~~think~~ think about what my dance is saying. I've just created dances for pure entertainment purposes. Another struggle I face is how am I going to end my dance. Since endings leave lasting impressions, I want my ending to be powerful & memorable. Loretta said my ending should resolve or let ~~my~~ my intention fade. Basically do I want to resolve what my dance is saying or end leaving the ~~audience~~ audience w/ their

interpretation. I can't end  
until I figure out  
my intention so,  
for now I am just  
stuck.



(36)

11-12-00

Today as I was dancing a few phrases came into my head. These phrases gave my dance feeling.

- "unconditional love"
- "unworthy of a ~~precious~~ gift"
- "love something so much that you don't know what to do"
- "uncertainty"
- "scared yet excited"
- "confused emotions"

I now feel that I am on my way to finding my intention. Today I noticed on my CD there is a string instrumental version of my song. I thought perfect cause this get me away from words/lyrics. To my disappointment there were lyrics but, to my enjoyment the strings added a nice flavor to the song. So, yet again

(37)

I changed my music.  
The only problem I face  
is that this version has  
two extra 8 counts in  
the middle of the song.  
So, I will have to  
revamp a little of my  
choreography. I actually  
figured it out that I  
only need an 8 count.  
Those single 8 counts are  
my weakness. I ~~struggle~~ struggle  
so hard with perfection &  
with limit time sometimes  
hinders that. I ~~am~~ am  
more confident about my  
piece on Friday I figured  
out when I am showing  
my piece which gives  
me 2 more weeks than  
I thought I had. I  
started thinking about  
costumes today & the first  
thing I thought of was a  
white short flowy dress with  
~~spaghetti~~ spaghetti straps. That  
was changed because I  
realized white doesn't

really represent my piece.  
I was thinking the same dress  
style but in Red or Burgundy.  
Those colors represent  
love & fire ~~which~~ which  
are themes or similar to  
themes that are ongoing  
through my dance. I am  
not sure or settled  
on a color or style  
but it is definitely  
going to be a dress. I  
actually choreographed  
with intention of  
wearing a dress.

11-16-00

Even though at times I feel frustrated after mentoring / coaching I also feel sense of accomplishment. I think during this ~~some~~ session I had a break through. I can't say what it is but I am starting to feel more confident with my dance and as a dancer. Loretta is so good for me & pushes me to an extent that I feel like giving up I give it one more try & what a wonderful ~~an~~ outcome. Having a meaning to my dances gives me meaning as a dancer. I am coming close to concluding my dance which makes me excited yet scared at the same time. finishing it means my school days are coming to an

(10)

end. This I don't mind  
but, I am starting to  
become a part of  
better said I am now  
finally in the loop  
of things which is  
quickly ending. Oh  
well, that's life. I am  
excited to perform my  
dance because so many  
of my close friends &  
loved ones will be in  
the audience. The only  
thing is that none of  
my family will be a  
part of it. This is the  
first time they will not  
be in the audience while  
I am performing.

Today I realized  
that when I am dancing  
this piece I am not  
really sure about my  
focus. Unsure focus is  
detracting attention  
from me. I have been  
too busy worrying about  
the choreography that

(41)

I forgot about the aspects of performing. In my piece focus plays a huge part because it will connect the audience to my intention. Eyes are extremely expressive means and I am doing a disjustice to my piece ~~with~~ by losing my focus. If anything focus will enhance my dance ability while I dance because I will know exactly where I need to be and help the audience connect to me.

(A2)

11-26-00

I am sitting in a plane on my way back to LA. ~~back~~ This entry is just a stream of conscience about my what is dance paper.

Dance is movement. Movement which comes in many forms. Movement keeps us as humans alive. It allows us to experience life & learn & adapt. It gives us the ability to communicate not only with sound but movement. Movement that can spark people's internal being. That internal being is emotion. Emotion gives meaning to life. Without it life would be boring & monotonous. Movement ~~initiates~~ initiates emotion as well as emotion initiates movement. Without movement we as humans

would be vegetables & miss out on all the beauty Movement provides us with. Most people take Movement for granted.

Dance is not just external Movement but, internal also. One might think the inside of ones body can't move but, they are wrong. When one dances the inside dances along just like ~~if~~ a swimmer swims their heart/inside is swimming w/ them. Dance is a spirit inside of us. It is the drive to move. The internal rhythm that keeps us going.

One's drive to dance can be just as powerful as someone w/ extraordinary talent. A persons spirit dances. A true dancers heart can be seen while



(9A)

they are dancing  
cause their body  
glows. Their ♡ is  
initiate the movement  
not the brain dictating  
to the body. A true  
dancers body will  
smile w/in so much  
that it will radiate  
out unto all who  
are watching.

11-30-00

In life one is faced with many internal struggles that tear at you till you feel like giving up. But there always seems to be a light at the end of the dark tunnel.

Life is a constant battle with internal struggles but, those struggles can lead to a rewarding ending.

Have you ever loved someone so much it tore at your insides? Well, my dance is about ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> type of love

(26)

Fear of receiving something so great that you don't feel worthy of having it.

~~Given~~ Given something so wonderful that you don't feel you deserve it & the internal struggle you go through to come to terms with you deserving it.

embrace

Often times in life we are offered things we don't feel worthy of but, through internal struggle we discover we would have been offered them if we had ~~not~~ <sup>been</sup> worthy. It is in accepting this we can feel ~~the~~ / appreciate the true joy of the gift we've been given.

(49)

Today was a wonderful day. Not only did I finish my dance but I had a very productive mentoring session.

As my school days are quickly coming to an end I am faced with the ~~pressure~~ pressure to finish everything. I am so overwhelmed & stressed out by how much <sup>work</sup> I have to do, that dancing is giving me an outlet. My dance is an emotion and tension release. Loretta has been ~~so~~ so wonderful throughout this process. She has given me little hints and pointers I will take with me into the real ~~world~~ world. With all this in mind I ~~must~~ must move on to other homework.

AGB

12-4-80

I woke up this morning with my stomach all tied in knots. I had a dream that I was performing my dance and I completely messed up. I think it was sub-conscience telling me that I am nervous about performing. Funny thing is I never get nervous, why all of a sudden now. I came to the conclusion that it is because I will be in front of a room full of dancers. Dancers are another dancers most critical audience. Yet they are also the most supportive and understanding. Also usually in a performance the audience is further away. I think another problem is facing the

49

realization that my college days are coming to an end. Performing this dance is the first step towards graduating. I am not sure if I am ready to face the world. I am extremely excited about getting out there yet ~~at~~ the same time nervous. I mean I am leaving my childhood behind. I am starting a new chapter in my ~~new~~ book of life. No matter what time will still march on and I must continue to grow.

(30)

12-6-00

On the eve of  
my last performance  
at LHM I am  
left with many  
different emotions.  
Excitement because  
I am entering the  
real world. Sadness  
because my college  
days are coming  
to a close. A little  
regretful because  
I did not get  
as involved as I  
would of like to.  
This dance is the  
symbol of closing  
yet another chapter  
in my book of life.  
I have ~~worked~~ work  
so hard to this one  
moment where I get  
one moment to show  
off my hard work.  
Tonight I laid down  
in the dark with  
one candle light as

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my ~~from~~ of light.  
I closed my eyes  
and visualized  
myself dancing.  
It was my ~~way~~ way  
of centering myself &  
preparing myself for  
tomorrow. Well I am  
signing off. This is  
my last ~~entry~~  
entry.



# Music, Costume & Dancer

# Music

Music is such a powerful element, which adds depth to dance. If the right music is chosen then the essence of a dance is enhanced. Now dance can be just as beautiful without music but I feel that the music/dance relationship provides a unique experience for the audience and the dancers. I grew up in a very musical family and have been exposed to many different kinds of music. With that background I can distinguish a good piece of music from the bad. A good piece of music effects my body as a whole. My body reacts by giving me chills, goose bumps, or brings tears to my eyes. This is an unconscious reaction my body does but when it does react I know I need to pay attention.

This is what happened when I heard the song "With Arms Wide Open". I was sitting in my car and all of a sudden my body got the chills and I was covered in goose bumps. The musicality and the dynamics of the song lured me in. There was so much passion in the instrumental part of the music. I heard the music several times after that on the radio. I would be sitting in my car visualizing myself dancing to this song. The musical score had such dynamics and intensity that my body could not resist. My body had to move. It was not until about the fifth time I heard the song that I realized it had lyrics. I was so wrapped up in the musical score that I seemed to tune out the lyrics. I decided at that moment I needed to have that song. I drove to the record store and purchased it. When I finally sat down with the lyrics in hand and the music in my ear did I realize how beautiful the song was. The singer was telling a personal story about the emotions he was going through about bringing a child into this world. The passion in his voice combined with the intense musical score deepened the meaning of the song. His lyrics touched my heart and moved my soul. I had the huge desire to create a piece to

this song but at the time I really had no reason to. A couple weeks went by and as I was cleaning out a drawer I came across my choreography notes from my original senior thesis dance. That's when it hit me. I was going to create a solo dance piece to this song.

Not only did the song play a big part in how I was going to create my senior thesis but so did a very close friend. Around this same time I found out a really good friend of mine was pregnant. I was emotional confused when I heard the news. I did not know whether to be happy or sad. She is just 22 still in college and her mom is supporting her. She had her whole life ahead of her and keeping this baby would change that. Through talking to her I realize her emotions paralleled the lyrics of the song. This made the song even more personal to me. That is when I decided to use my friend as my inspiration. I could tell a story using her situation. Not only did I have her emotions to use but I also had mine. I would sit and wonder how would I feel or deal with her situation. I put myself in her shoes and imagine what I would do. I took her feelings and interpreted them into my body. With time and much thought I came to the theme of my dance. It was through her that I found the true meaning of why I was dancing to this song.

With all these emotions running through my body I created my piece. After I had started my piece I came across two other versions of the song. The original one, which is the one, I have plus a radio version and an instrumental version. I was struggling with my piece because the music was so long and I did not feel I could do justice to that long of piece. I decided to check out the radio version. It turned out to be about a minute shorter with less dynamics. It still carried the intensity but lost the lyrical and hard musical changes. Since the radio version stayed up beat and was easier for me

to choreograph to I stuck with that version. The radio version stayed up-tempo and I found it easier to choreograph to. It put me in my jazz element, which I am most comfortable in. Later on when I felt my dance was powerful enough to hold its own, I decided to check out the instrumental version. I felt I did not need lyrics to add depth to my dance. I was hoping this version did not have lyrics but it turned out it did. The interesting thing about this version was that it mixed traditional string instruments and blended it with a modern rock beat. I found this combination wonderful and felt it added an extra element to the music. Through the process I finally decided on the instrumental version.

This song stirs up so many emotions in me. It makes me happy and sad in a couple of seconds. In regards to the music dance relationship I felt my dance complimented the song. With the influence of lyrics it was difficult at times for me to get away from interpreting them into obvious movement. The music guides my dance and helps to clarify the story my body is telling. I also faced the problem of mimicking the musical score. It was hard for me to stop listening to my body, which happened to follow the dynamics of the music. I would like to believe my dance enhances that message of the song. People at first are not going to be aware of the lyrics, they will just be aware of the power in my movements. I hope that every once in a while throughout the piece the audience will hear what the lyrics are saying or at least feel the power of the musical score. I feel so passionate about the piece that I want the audience to feel my passion.

I believe that the music can add an element of emotion and understanding to my piece. If my choreography went against the music I think the audience would feel

uncomfortable. This is even more so because my song is a popular song and most people are familiar with it. With that in mind I thought the audience would expect the dance to compliment the song. So to add a little imbalance I put in a couple of sequences that went against the music. This mostly occurred when I was trying to portray a struggle. Struggles are not comfortable or perfectly designed so, to show discomfort I went against the music. For me this was difficult to do but I felt strongly that it needed to be done to add extra emotion.

In most cases music and dance co-exist. This only happens when a choreographer is completely in tune with the music. Dance should enhance music as well as music should enhance dance. Such a relationship happens when the song can be felt without the music and the dance can be visualized without movements while listening to the music. When both music and dance are in coordination then the audience receives the complete dance experience they deserve. When they are not in coordination then either the dance is not fulfilling the music and the focus is on the music itself or the dance is too busy so the music is not heard. If the choreographer decides to not use music the dance usually writes its own music. The music is written internally by the dancers who then portray it while they are dancing. Music gives a dance meaning and dance gives music life.

# Costume

When I pictured myself dancing to this song I always imagined a long flowing dress. I choreographed with a dress in mind so a lot of my movements and bodylines were designed to look good in one. I felt a dress would enhance some of my movements by adding another element. The dress would be medium size in length and a slip dress style. It would be an empire waste to aid to the bust line. The empire waste would allow the dress to move freely and be less clingy to my body. It would have spaghetti straps and be light in color. I looked through several different costume closets and shopped on many occasions at many different stores to find such a dress. To my disappointment I found nothing. My original ideas for dresses are drawn on the attached sheet.

I had no luck finding my ideal dress until I went home for a weekend and went through my mother's closet. I found a white night gown with an empire waste. It fell just below my knees so it was the length I was looking for. It was almost exactly what I had pictured myself wearing. The only problem was I really did not want white. I felt that since the dance was about a struggle white was not the color I would associate with that emotion. I also found an old sundress in my closet that was shorter and black with red roses on it. These two dresses gave me different options to check out. I was luck to have had the opportunity to evaluate the two extremes. If anything I was thinking that the black sundress would be a good practice dress.

During one of my coaching sessions I presented both dresses to Loretta who then wanted to see me dance in both of them. After I did dance in both of them and with the help of Loretta I came to some finalized ideas regarding my costume. She gave me a lot of pointers on which dress danced better and what was more flattering on me. To start

off Luretta asked me what I was going to wear underneath the dress. I told her a nude leotard and suntan tights. She told me that to give my legs more length tights that came down to my ankles would be best. The shorter tights cut my legs in half and restricted the effectiveness of movement. If anything they distract from my dancing. I then found out that the shorter style of dress was more flattering. Having the dress above my knees added length to my legs and it flowed better with my movements. After dancing in both dresses I realized that the longer dress got in my way and keep me from executing moves fully. The longer dress seemed to have a contrasting effect on my choreography. It cut of bodylines and made it look as if I was only dancing from my knees down.

The next thing we decided on was color. Luretta made me aware of the contrast between dancing in light colors verses dark. The lighter the color the more it distracted form my dancing. Since, I have a darker skin tone the light colored dress seemed to dance by itself. From an audience perspective Luretta was watching the dress rather then the dancing because the dress grabbed her attention. With darker colors they seem to blend better with my skin and the spotlight was more on my dancing. It was if the darker color complimented me and danced along side me rather than against me. I found Luretta's input very valuable and I will carry her hints with me throughout my dance career. It is little things like that, that help me package myself better.

I decided on the costume I wore because it was the first thing I found that fulfilled all my requirements. The only thing it was lacking was the empire waste. I was disappointed about this but sometimes one has to make compromises. When I danced in it, it did not interfere with my dancing. It flowed along side my body just how I imagined it would. It was comfortable and not clingy. It was a dark color and it just so happened

to be black which is one of my best colors. In addition it was in my price range and something I could wear again. I also liked the fact that it had adjustable straps. I seem to always have to alter spaghetti straps but this one was done for me.

The next decision I had to make was what type of shoe to wear. I originally thought I would go barefoot but with time that changed. Since my choreography is so demanding I felt I needed more support. I needed to feel comfortable in my shoes and the confidence to know I could execute my movements to the fullest. I wanted a strong base so I could feel secure in my dancing. All these requirements pointed to my jazz shoes. My jazz shoes are broken in and I feel confident in them. It is almost like they are my safety net. Knowing I have them on makes me believe I can execute my steps on a consistent bases. If there was one thing I would have liked to change was the shoe color. I really would have liked to have tan but since time was limited I had to make do. If I had the chance to perform this on stage I would defiantly have tan jazz shoes.

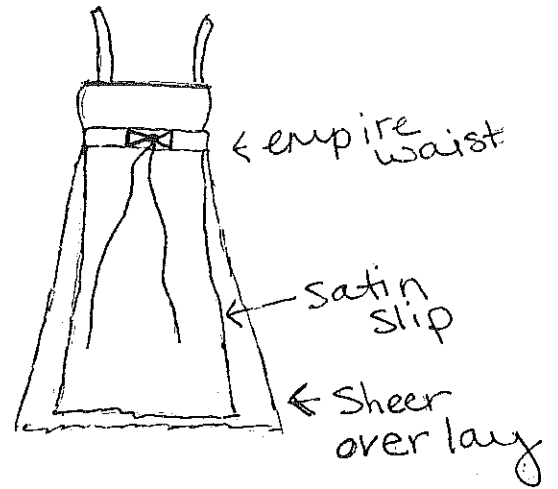
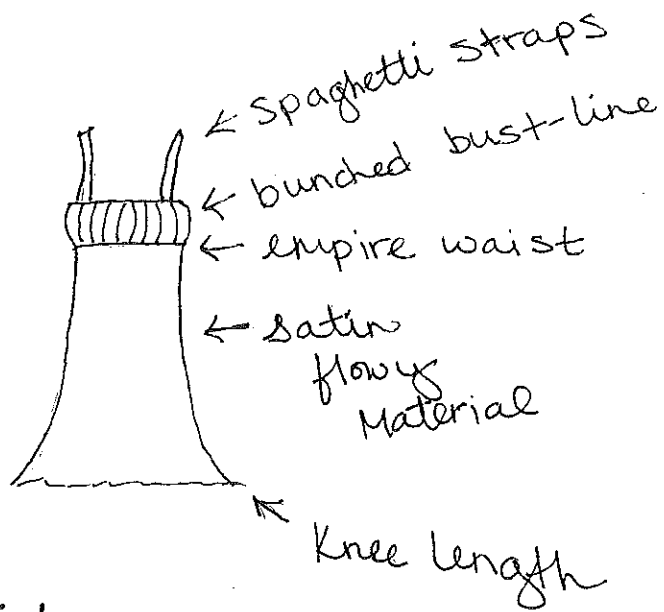
With my outfit picked out and my shoes decided on what else is there to think about? How will I wear my hair? I originally thought I would wear it down because it would add gentleness to the piece. That was quickly changed when it got in my way and interfered with my dancing. After watching some dance tapes and seeing girls dance with their hair down, I came to the conclusion that too much hair would divert the audiences attention from my dancing to my hair. I felt that a ponytail would be too severe and constricting. I wanted my hair to flow in unison with my dress. I then played with half up styles. Most of them got in my way of spotting and stuck to my face when I was sweating. I finally decided on a low half up ponytail. It was the first style that I got



the results I was looking for with the least amount of distraction. It gave me a touch of softness, which I was looking for without interfering with my dancing.

To sum up my final costume I wore a black satin slip dress (nightgown). It hit me above the knees and is spaghetti strapped. Underneath my dress I wore a black leotard and suntan tights. I chose a black leotard because it complimented the color of the dress. I thought nude would have diverted the audience from my dance. It would of looked as if I was naked underneath and I did not want people wasting their attention on figuring out if I was or was not naked underneath. I ended up wearing white jazz shoes and my hair was tied half back in a low ponytail.

# Original Idea:



## Colors:

light pink  
white  
lavender

pastels  
< soft  
light >

## Material:

satin  
soft  
free flowing  
shiny

## Other Ideas:

Short sundress  
night gown  
lingerie

## Underneath:

Nude spaghetti strapped leotard  
ankle length sheer tights

# Dancer

I decided on making this piece a solo. This is because every time I visualized dancing to the song, it was a single girl dancing in an empty room. I felt the dancer needed to portray the singer. The dancer would take on the roll of the storyteller and her body would tell the story. This way the theme of the dance would be more powerful. This song could have been done as an ensemble piece but I felt that for my purposes it would have been too much. Too many dancers would have confused the story. I also think that the audience would have been more focused on the dancers rather than the connection of the movement with the music.

After deciding that it would be a solo piece the next decision would be who would be the dancer. I choose myself because I have never danced in a piece I have choreographed or danced a solo. I thought it would be a challenge and a great learning experience. To my surprise I learned more than I thought I would. I also chose myself because I did not know many dance majors at the time and I was not comfortable working with someone I did not know. I was also unsure of certain girls dance ability and time did not allow me to observe each dancer I did know. Another down fall was that I was gone last semester so people were unsure of who I was and so if I held an audition I did not think I would have a good turn out. In addition scheduling played a part in dancing the piece myself. This is because I did not want to bother working around somebody else's schedule. I wanted to work on my time. This worked out wonderfully because I could schedule and cancel rehearsals whenever I needed to without inconveniencing anyone. My dance schedule fit perfectly with my life style.

The biggest factor in deciding to dance the piece myself was because I felt such a connection with the song. I did not think someone else could portray my personal emotions the way my body could have. The song had such a profound effect on me that I did not feel I had the ability to dictate to someone how to interpret and execute my choreography. To put it selfishly I did not think anyone could have done justice to my dance except myself. I choreographed according to my body and what it told me to do. The meaning would have gotten muddled had I had to teach it to someone else. I felt such a personal connection to the music and the theme that I thought only I could dance the way I visualized my piece.

One problem I faced in doing a solo was the distinction between when I needed to be the choreographer and when I needed to be the performer. When I was performing I was concentrating too much on what I was doing wrong and how bad it looked rather than dancing with my heart. I found it difficult to turn off the choreographer in me. At times it was uncomfortable to dance because if I was not perfect I would be disappointed in myself and that kept me from moving forward. It was not until the dance was finished that I got to put myself completely in the performing frame of mind. That is when I finally got to dance mind, body, and soul. It was the most overwhelming feeling when I was able to let go and just dance. I became the storyteller and got to dance in the moment.

Going into this I did not realize how difficult it would be to be the choreographer and the dancer. As a choreographer I found it beneficial because I know what looks good on my body and what I can execute well. It was bad though because at times I would get so caught up in an eight count that I would just fill it with steps. Since it was on myself I was unable to see how bad it looked. Luckily every time I did that Loretta would catch it

and bring it to my attention. She did not let me get away with anything that took away from me dancing to my fullest potential. Another difficulty I faced was how I would visualize myself dancing in relation to reality. In my dreams I could do any step I wanted to do but when the reality came along I could not execute it the way I would have liked. I had higher expectations of my dance ability, which frustrated me at times. There were certain moves I felt would have added flare to my piece but I could not execute them the way I would have liked. Therefore, I did not include them in my piece.

As the dancer it was fun to experiment on myself to see what my body would come up with. This was also a down fall because at times I would injure myself. If I was just the choreographer then I could have had my dancer figure it out on her body. Being the only dancer I did not have to worry about cleaning someone else or making sure the ensemble was dancing in unison. Yet, I could not see the choreography up front so I could not make changes right away. Usually as the choreographer you are able to see the dance unfold and make the necessary changes on the spot. Working by myself I did not have that advantage. I had to wait until coaching and then make changes after I had already practiced it the less affective way.

Overall, I found creating this piece and dancing the piece to be a wonderful opportunity. Throughout this process I grew as a dancer. Having to create this project all by myself gave me a sense of pride and closeness. It was a personal journey for me. It was almost as if it was a right of passage into the world of dance. This dance symbolizes the end of my college life and the beginning of the real world. It enhanced my passion for dance and gave me a richer background as a choreographer. Though coaching and personal exploration I feel that I now have more to offer my future students when I teach

dance. This journey taught me things about myself as a dancer and as a person. I realized that even though I have had a lot of experience dancing and choreographing that it is not enough. This piece opened up a new facet of being a dancer. I had to learn another technique and adjust to make it work for me. Through this experience I have become a better dancer and aware of the fact that I still have more to learn.

# Theme & Intention

# Theme

My theme is one of love, worthiness, and struggle. This came from a close friend's personal experience with bringing a child into this world. My theme evolved as she dealt with the different phases of pregnancy to motherhood. I wanted to tell her story through my dance. What I realized is that by keeping my theme so personal to myself the audience might not connect to it. So, I broadened my theme to include many situations in life. This causes the audience to participate actively in watching. "We look at the dance to impart the sensation of living in an affirmation of life, to energize the spectator into keener awareness to the vigor, the mystery, the humor, the variety, and the wonder of life" (Martha Graham/Exley). My dance will only be successful if the audience is attentive to the significance it plays in life.

As I danced I explored my emotions. I found it hard to identify what I was feeling and why the lyrics had such a profound effect on my dance. It was not until after my friend had her baby and I held him in my arms that I made the connection. My experience and my friends had resembled the lyrics of the song. That is the moment my theme became apparent to me. I could not believe the love I felt for this little being. He was a gift in my eyes. A gift that could fill our lives with love. That was the first time I had felt love at first sight. I felt so unworthy of holding this precious gift and be a part of his life. Watching my friend hold her baby there was a sparkle in her eyes. One of unconditional love and hope that she might give him everything he deserves.

From this experience my theme blossomed. It started out as an expression of unconditional love and became so much more. How can one deal with the fact of be worthy of a gift? Often times in life we are offered things we go not feel worthy of



having (for example money, jewelry, love, and even a child) but through an internal struggle we discover we would not of been offered them if we had not been worthy. It is in accepting this we can feel and appreciate the true joy of the gift we had been given. To be worthy of something it to be deserving of a reward or praise. How does one know they are worthy of something? It is a concept that is hard to explain. Worthiness is an interesting situation to encounter and deal with. For if we cannot explain what it is then how to know if we are worthy of something. With this worthiness can cause an intense internal struggle. How does a person willing feel worthy of something when it causes such inter turmoil? I have gotten a bad grade on a paper that I did not feel worthy to recieve but it is through dealing with this feeling internally that I came to accept the grade I got. For had I deserved a higher one I would have recieved.

What is a gift? A gift is something one gives: a present. These presents are not always tangible. They come in my types of packages it just depends on how an individual defines what a gift is them. I view friendship as a gift and the love my parents give me as a gift. Who is to tell me they are not? No one because I feel that those intangible items are gifts and feelings are never right or wrong. They are just feelings and no has the right to say differently. Gifts can cost money but I feel the greatest gifts are free. Intangible gifts can be seen in all walks of life. Gifts can be seen in lovers, parents with their children, and grandparents. Gifts bring a sense of love and happiness to the receiver. It is through realizing that you are worthy of a gift that you can truly enjoy it.

With all these random thoughts going through my head it gave me inspiration and the drive to create my piece. For if anything I was going to dance this piece for that child

so he might feel my love for him. I wanted to share with him the love he made me feel. I wanted to share this powerful emotion with my audience. I wanted to put this intense feeling into movement but not just as love but how one comes to terms with feeling worthy of love. "I see the dance being used as a means of communication between soul and soul-to express what is too deep, too fine for words" (Ruth St. Denis/Exley). I wanted to provoke emotion in the audience and give them something to think about when I was done. I wanted to connect with the audience and leave a lasting impression.

I found a section in a book, which describes my feelings, on how I want to approach my theme.

*"Dances. Like other works or art are about what the audience thinks they are about, whether or not that is what their creator think they intend them to be about. It may be interesting to listen to artists talk about their own work, but it is usually a mistake to regard what they say as definitive. Often what dances actually communicate to audiences bears little relationship to what choreographers think they had in mind when creating them. Such artwork does not enforce a focus on the audience; it forces them to participate actively in the work, to make their own choices about where to look, or what to hear, and, after experiencing the work, decide individually how and/or if the perceived images relate to their personal experiences of life and somehow enrich them" (Sorell 213).*

The theme of my dance can be interpreted anyway just as long as it effects the audience. To state my theme as I expressed through my dance is: Through life we are presented with gifts we feel unworthy to receive and it is through an internal struggle where we find our worthiness. For if we had not been worthy we would not have

received. This stemmed from such a personal experience that I found it hard to put my feelings into research. How are somebody else's thoughts and feelings going to enhance mine? I danced what I felt. I learned by talking to my friend and watching her what my theme meant. My research was through her, my family, and my friends because those are the ones that stirred up feelings inside of me that gave my dance meaning. They brought my theme to life. It is through interactions with them and watching them that I felt the meaning of my theme. I wanted theme of my dance to stay personal but allow others to partake in it. As long as I knew the reason I was dancing no external information would have enhanced my dance or give more meaning to my theme. For one's personal emotions can be strong enough to carry a dance and my theme will develop through the eyes of the audience.

# My Aesthetic

# My Aesthetic

Before entering LMU my aesthetic was strictly jazz and tap with influences from lyrical, musical theater, hip hop, and commercial. Now looking at my aesthetic I find it hard to pin point. LMU has opened my eyes to many different avenues and facets of dance. My aesthetic is one of inclusion, variety, and exploration. I am not the dancer I used to be. I have grown and adapted the teachings of the dancers my life has encountered. Looking back I found some tendencies I happened to follow with my dancing and choreography. The tendencies make up my personal aesthetic as a dancer, choreographer, and audience member.

One aspect of my aesthetic is what motivates me to dance or choreograph. A majority of my dances stem from an inner emotion or state of mind. I create dances and dance from this inner feeling. There is a drive inside me that causes my body to do certain movements. Each dance I do has either an internal connection or a literal intention. Martha Graham once said, "...movement in dance can have any one of a hundred significance's" (Graham 2). Either it is a story, an emotion, a lesson, an exploration, or just for the pure enjoyment of dance. No matter what all dances mean something. I take a lot of pride in each piece I choreograph because they all contain a piece of my soul. My frame of mind at the moment of inspiration also effects how I dance or what I choreograph.

I choreograph and dance for my pure love of dance. That love comes from intensity inside me. A desire to express myself through movement and let others experience my passion. When creating a piece of work I like to be by myself in an empty room. Paul Taylor once said "I just get busy in the studio and sometimes when I start I

haven't got a clue what we're going to do. I just start. If it doesn't lead anywhere, then I start over again" (Concepts of Movement handout). I find this statement very true and describes my approach to choreography. Somedays, I just go to the studio and dance to see what will come out. This allows me the freedom to explore and create a piece without inhibitions. I look inside my inner self and turn my emotions into movement. Sometimes this approach works and sometimes it does not. Eventually I will leave with a piece of work I am proud of. "Duncan emphasized the personal in dance...which was expressive of deep, individualized emotions" (Banes 2). I might not know what I am going to choreograph but I do know that it will contain a deeper meaning then it started out as.

As a dancer I have a fear of the unknown. I like to dance within my comfort zone. For example jazz, tap, and lyrical. This poses a problem at times because it can impede my exploration as a dancer. If I encounter a style of dance that makes me question my ability as a dancer I get automatically turned off. This fear keeps me from growing and learning as a dancer. Throughout LMU this fear has been challenged. I have been forced to experience dance styles that made me uncomfortable. It made me explore different movement styles and taught me how to become comfortable with them. The thing that was a huge factor was that I could not back out once things got uncomfortable. I had to stick through it because my grades depended on it. What this gave me was a newfound appreciation and love for styles of dance that I may never have experienced before.

What does this have to do with my aesthetic? Well, it is simple it took me out of my comfort zone and gave me larger palette of dance knowledge. This knowledge will

been incorporated into my dancing and choreography throughout my career. I not only have the styles I comfortable with but others to chose from. This gives me the ability to combine these various styles into a more diverse piece and make me more marketable as a dancer. I have become opened to exploring movement rather than putting a sequence of steps together. As a dancer my skill is at a higher level and my choreography is not predictable. This variety makes me who I am as a dancer and how I approach dance situations. Therefore, my aesthetic is broad and can be defined as all encompassing.

My aesthetic parallels music. Music drives me to dance. Music stirs an emotion in me that in turn initiates the type of movement my body does. I cannot sit still when I listen to music. If music has a beat or dynamically composed I have to move. If I do not feel connection to music then my dancing has an empty feeling. A piece of music initiates my desire to choreograph. When dancing if I do not connect to the music then I have a hard time selling the dance. "Since music is considered to be the truest expression of the human soul, dance, which replicates its compositional structure, can likewise indicate the soul's ephemeral but fervent states of being" (Foster 245). Music is in my soul and is expressed through dance. Even when the music is absent I still feel the emotion it provokes. When I dance in harmony with music is when my intention is most apparent.

This also applies to when I am an audience member. I enjoy dance pieces where the dance and the music are in sync. Where it looks as if the music was composed for the piece and the choreography was made for the music. I do not like to watch pieces where the choreography is too overpowering of the music or the music drowns out the choreography. The perfect blend is when the music is apparent in the background and the

dance compliments it. "If you look at a dancer in silence, his or her body will be the music. If you turn the music on, that body will be an extension of what you're hearing" (Jamison 41). For me music and dance go hand in hand. As a dancer I enjoy and appreciate all forms of dance but sometimes I do not connect with certain pieces. I tend to enjoy works of dance that I can make a personal connection to. I like dances that stir emotion and are not just a bunch of technical dance tricks put to music. For that connection makes me a more active audience member and inspires me to create a piece.

I find it difficult to ask a dancer to identify their aesthetic. Dancers are always evolving and changing. Dancers do typically migrate to one style. That style for me would be jazz. I have been training in this style since I was young. For me though I cannot say that jazz is strictly my current aesthetic because my aesthetic is a blending of many styles. What I have found is that I tend to rely on my jazz roots as a jumping off point. With jazz as my bases for dancing I am able to incorporate many styles. Jazz can be danced in a lyrical form, a hip hop form, and technical form. An up-tempo dance can be filled with percussive, locomotor steps, and giving into weight. While more lyrical piece will be lighter, with more passive qualities, and more free flow. The only problem is that these movement qualities along with the rest are cross-cultural. In jazz they can apply to any form.

In looking back on pieces I have done I can see some patterns in movement qualities. I tend to use far kinesphere. This is something I find comforting and effective. It lets me be vulnerable and expose myself to the outside world. Yet, it shows my confidence as a dancer and gives me the illusion that I can do anything. Dancing big gives me confidence and shows the audience that I am proud of who I am. I also think I



enjoy reaching away from my body because it makes me feel bigger and compensate for my shortness. Depending on the intention of the dance I think that dancing larger creates more impact on the audience.

Another pattern I fall into is locomotion through space. Since I am such a high-energy girl I like to keep moving. Standing still makes me feel as if I am not accomplishing anything. In relation to locomotion I travel in direct pathways. I lean towards this because I like to know exactly where I am going and I find it to make the choreography cleaner. I find indirect pathways create a more emotional feel but can look sloppy at times. No matter what to the dancer the pathways will always be direct because they know exactly where and when then need to be in a spot. Direct pathways bring out the perfectionist in me. In my mind cleaner means perfect. In relation to energies I lean towards bound movement. I like control and I have a hard time letting loose and giving control to someone else. I like to be secure while I am dancing and bound movements give me this control. Other qualities I use are pressing and punching mixed with floating. Since the qualities all inter connected it is hard for me to isolate which ones I specifically use.

“Even in the most traditional setting, the forms and meanings of dance change when dancers feel the need to come up with something new, or to alter or adapt something old, to fit new circumstances” (Jonas 35). Even though I connect to the technical side of dance and favor jazz does not mean that defines me. Trying to define my aesthetic is extremely difficult and will change with time. I am constantly learning as a dancer and when I stop learning is when I stop dancing. By being exposed and experiencing many approaches to dance I have become a better dancer. A dancer who no

matter what will have a inclining to dance and choreograph the way that makes me comfortable. My comfort zone has broadened and includes many new elements. My aesthetic encompasses my motivation, to music, to how I dance, to what movement qualities I favor, and will forever keep being inclusive.

# Aesthetic Survey

Dance forms in the order of ability	Dance forms in order of love	Today--any company of your dreams	History--any company of your dreams	Most admired performer(s)	Today--really do not respond to	History--really do not respond to
Jazz Tap Lyrical Hip-Hop Ballet Modern	Jazz/Tap swing & ballroom (Salsa) Hip Hop Ballet	Rockettes → Stomp Las Vegas showgirl → Any touring group like: Fosse Swing musical Theater Broadway		Fred Astaire & Ginger Rogers Gregory Hines Gene Kelly	Some Modern styles contact improve	Modern Feminist Movement
		* I am not sure of any Jazz or Tap companies		* The staff at my studio from back home. Marie Stinnett		

# Aesthetic Survey

Other artistic abilities which affect your dance taste or dance making	Your strongest abilities as a performer	Your strongest abilities as a dance technician	The dance form that is mainly you and the style within the form that most resembles your work--or descriptors	The part of technique class you love the most	The part of technique class you do not relate to	Other areas of dance which you relate to: comp, history, kines, music, etc.
<p>my love for all types of music and how music affects my body as a whole</p>	<p>Attitude, facials, my love for dance shines out to the audience. I can sell almost all dances.</p>	<p><u>Precise movements</u> my good foundation of dance technique. <u>Jumps</u> spacial awareness</p>	<p>Jazzy with influences from: Hip Hop Lyrical &amp; musical theater</p>	<p>I love everything about technique. <u>I can always improve + get stronger + technique provides that for me.</u></p>	<p>At times I get frustrated doing turns because that is my weakest link.</p>	<p><u>MUSIC</u> I can relate to kines because it is giving me information about how my body is working and how to maintain a healthy body</p>

## Values and Meanings

What gives your life meaning?

Nature

Family

Work

Spirit

Money → on a lesser degree

Play

Relationships

Gourmet Food

Clothes

Physical Appearance → on a lesser degree

Status

Dance

Music

Good Friends

What are your deepest values?

Honest

Trust

Fidelity

Loyalty

Honor

Patience

Kindness

Joy → happiness

Long-suffering

Gentleness-Meekness

Love

Monogamy

Perseverance

Comfort

10 Commandments

Beauty

Truth

How important will these things be to you?

Fame

< Marriage >

< Children >

A Career

A Job

A lot of money--comfortable money--adequate money

< Health >

< Happiness >

#1 health & happiness / #2 a career I enjoy  
that makes comfortable money / #3 marriage  
and children / #4 Fame / #5 a job

\* I believe all these things will be important to me. But, none of it will happen unless I am healthy and happy to be alive.



# What Is Dance

# Summary of Dance Studies

## Ballet II

- Learned basics for barre work and how to execute them properly.
- Not only learned how to execute but also how to spell and define specific elements of ballet.
- Practiced the discipline ballet takes to master movements.
- Mastered all five basic positions and the additional directions each position has.
- Broke down the different movements of elevation. Examples: which jumps went from both feet and landed on both feet, from both feet to land on one foot, and from one foot to land on both.
- Practiced traveling movements across the floor to master them before placing into a movement sequence.
- Learned keys to spotting and turning effectively.

## Ballet III

- Took ballet II knowledge and adapted it another level.
- Went into harder variations of ballet basics and put them into barre work that challenged the class.
- Developed a strong work ethic and discipline.
- Did movement sequences that combined many ballet steps. It taught us to be quick on our feet and apply the knowledge we had learned.
- Focus on mastering our turns and jumps so we can perform with grace and effortless.
- Worked on strength by doing many adages and sustaining movements.

- Teacher applied his outside knowledge to help class understand why we do certain steps.
- Mastery of ballet movement.

## Modern II

- Connection of head, tail, heel and how it applies to my body alignment.
- Body alignment and identification of specific muscles to aid in proper alignment.
- Bartenieff Fundamentals- body rocks, pelvic tilt, and cross diagonals.
- Focused on centering our body and developing a strong base to work off of.
- Establish comfort in parallel position and how to maintain it while dancing.
- Energy qualities- swing, free flow, and bound movement.
- Sagittal, lateral, and horizontal plane and how they apply to movement.
- How to execute, identify, and apply over curve, under curve, shaping, carving to movement.
- Musicality and how to sustain movement to fill out the music.

## Modern III

- Fall and recover technique. How to give in to gravity and weight at the same time being able to bounce back up.
- Abdominal strength and how it is the core to all movement.
- Contact improvisation and how to work off another partner. Also how to trust each other as a class.
- Body alignment



- How to take a movement series, execute it with in a rhythmic pattern, and without getting out of time with the music.
- Many different studies that tested our balance in many positions and gave us new body awareness.
- Movement sequences that dealt with spatial and direction awareness.
- Specific strengthening sequences like fortification #1, caucsis balance, and Graham floor technique.

## Bartenieff Fundamentals

- The basic foundation for body connectivity.
- Fundamentals of efficient function and expression in human movement.
- Patterns of total body organization: breath, core to distal, head-tail, upper and lower, body half, cross lateral.
- Emphasized the importance of a child development through these patterns and how if one is missed it could cause a learning disability.
- How these patterns are connected to brain development and learning styles.
- We explored the six patterns on our bodies and applied them to different elements of dance.
- We found our weakest link of the patterns and developed a movement sequence that would strengthen us in that specific area.
- Explored stability and mobility along with inner connectivity and outer expressivity.

## Laban Movement Analysis

- Broke down Laban's techniques into working and applicable knowledge.

- Learned about body concept- patterns of total body organization, body attitude, gesture, body part initiation, and phrasing core connectivity.
- Space concept- kinesphere, dimensions, planes, spatial pulls, and scales.
- Studied central, peripheral, and transverse movement.
- Learned how to use a directional matrix, dimensional cross of axis, and diagonal cross of axis charts.
- Shape- still forms, shape modes, and qualities.
- Efforts- flow (free to bound), weight (lightness to strength), space (direct to indirect), and time (sustained to quick).
- All the above stated were studied in depth and applied to group studies. We not only learned how to perform and apply these qualities to dance but we also learned how to notate them. We learned the ability to take these symbols and create a piece in writing or see them on paper and form them into dance.

## Fundamentals of Dance Composition

- Introduced the class to the elements of dance: time, space, and energy.
- We took each element and broke it down into different studies.
- We learned movement vocabulary and how to apply the vocabulary to our bodies.
- We explored the creative process. Movement intention, individual voice, development, and discovery to name a few.
- We took a non-conventional way to look and explore movement.
- Learned how to take literal and abstract information and turn it into a movement sequence.
- How to connect, feel energy, and connect with another person.

- Sharing of weight and working along side someone so we might be one with a created piece.
- Focused on performance principles, the creative process, and what it means to be an active audience member.
- We learned how to let loose and risk so we might fall upon a larger more spectacular movement.
- Silencing the outer world and listening to what you inner self was tell you to do.
- Learn to claim our work and connect to it in mind, spirit, and body.
- We learned how to work as a community and make the community comfortable so that everyone would feel free to explore movement.
- We did not dance we explored the idea of movement in various ways and through various studies.

## Styles and Forms

- Explored and developed our choreographic aesthetic.
- Went into greater depth about the elements of dance: time, space, and energy. These were the bases for movement studies.
- We broke the elements down individually experimented and explored the foundational components that make up these elements.
- We explored the use of motif and phrase development throughout dance.
- In depth study of music in relation to choreography and all the different ways music and dance are related. Examples: Music used as source for inspiration, music and dance related synonymous, music used as sound backdrop, and music composed to fit the dance.

- Put into working knowledge the choreographic devices. Examples: Augmentation, diminution, repetition, mirroring, and accumulation.
- Went into detail about Laban's effort graph and analyzed each effort in different studies.
- We learned not only how to apply everything we learned but also how to identify it while watching dance.

## Music for Dance

- The foundation to read and write composed music.
- Understanding on how to notate music and communicate with a live accompanist.
- How to identify specific components of music. Examples: different time signatures, the different notes and what their values are, and the elements of rhythm.
- In relation to drumming I learned how to combine different rhythms to create a piece of music.
- It taught me different rhythmic patterns and styles.
- Experience of a different style of music.

## Swing/Ballroom dance

- Principles of leading and following.
- Ability to get comfortable dancing with anyone.
- Basic swing and salsa techniques. Learning how to execute the steps properly and accurately.
- Touched on some other styles: waltz, tango, rumba, and fox trot.

- It gave an overview of many of the social dances so we might carry this basic knowledge into social dance situations.

## Dance of Mexico

- Gave me an introduction to Mexican folk dance and what an important part it plays within the culture.
- Taught me specific dances from different parts of Mexico.
- Learned how to identify the different dance styles by the style of musical score.
- Got to experience performing Mexican dance first hand and the exactness needed to execute the footwork.
- Got a better understanding of Mexican culture and traditions. For example Los Dias de Los Muertos, Cinco de Mayo, and traditional costume dress styles.

## Dance History

- Learned the evolution of dance and the many styles it consisted of.
- We looked at the historical significance of different dance styles and how they effected society in various parts of the country during different eras.
- We explored the political, economical, and cultural background of how dance effected different eras.
- We got to learn about specific dancers who contributed and made an impact on the world of dance.
- We learned the choreographic styles of specific dancers and how to spot it in performance.

- Specifically we learned about Russian ballet, dance styles from the Renaissance era, court ballet during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, theatre dance, Neo-classical/Pre-Romantic ballet, Romanticism, and modern dance.

## Kinesology

- This is the study of human movement and we learned all the facets that make up our body. With that we learned how to maintain a health body so we may function to fullest potential. This class taught us how to apply the information we had learn to our bodies so we might develop strong bodies that will carry us throughout our dancing careers.
- The class broke down the human body into smaller parts so we might understand the impact each element has on the body.
- We learned about the anatomy of a cell and what nutrients we need as people to maintain a healthy balance. For without the proper percentage of nutrients our body needs our body cannot function properly.
- The skeletal system- taught us bone formation, growth and remodeling. We also learned the importance of calcium and when there is a lack of it what can occur. Identification and classification of bones was another component to this section. Also what different bone fractures look like and the keys to letting them heal properly.
- Muscles and the muscular system- we learned about the basic movement directions and movement analysis. We were taught how a muscle contracts and what other components play a role in muscle contractions. Also what the function of muscle is the different types, and where they are found. The most important part of this section

was learning what to do when we injure a muscle, ligament, or tendon. How to distinguish the different injuries and how to properly take care of it.

- The heart and circulatory system- Without this system none of us would be alive. We learned the anatomy of the heart and how it functions. In relation to that we focused on endurance and cardiovascular effects of physical training. This gave us information on how to get most out of exercise and the importance of maintaining a healthy heart.
- Nervous system- taught us about how and why we react to stimuli. It broke down the nervous system into different facets and what effect they each have on our body.
- Nutrition was also a big part because it was our way to combine all that we had learned into maintaining a healthy body.
- This class provided a scientific look towards dancing and what we need to do as humans to optimally operate.

## Principles of Teaching Dance

- Focused on the development of children and how movement will enhance learning and retention.
- Brought attention to creativity and how we can use it to improve the quality of life.
- In class each of us were asked to each focus individually on what we had learned and risked through out our schooling at LMU.
- Taught us how to teach creative dance exercises that also could be applied to academics.
- How usage of all the five senses can be beneficial to learning environment.

- We learned that everybody learns differently, teachers need to be aware of that and accommodate students.
- Taught us how to move to fully activate our learning potential. We learned specific exercises to simulate the brain.
- What steps we need to take to make the school systems see the importance of the arts in the school and the benefit of letting children experience the arts.

## To Dance is Human

- We learned the connection of dance to different cultures.
- How movement connects all humans to dance.
- How dance can interpret, define, and be the inspiration for many cultures.
- We learned self-exploration into places that made us uncomfortable.
- The study of who we are and what makes us the way we are.
- Looked at dance around us and how it applied to everyday life.
- Discovered what it is to be a person. To make things, imagine, make willingful relationships, to be empathetic, to be conscious and determine consequences.
- Connected all cultures to form one society within dance.
- We learned about assimilation and acculturation and what it means to conform to these life styles.
- Everyone has an internal rhythm that connects all of us to each other.
- Movement is a form of communication of emotions.
- All forms of dance stem from each other and how they are all connected.
- We also learned what makes each style of dance unique and personal.



- Just as it is natural to breathe, it is natural to move, movement is a form of dance, so all humans dance.

# What is dance?

To live is to be human. To be human is to move. Emotions create us to move and movement is an outlet for expression, which leads to dance. Dance is not merely an activity but a way of life. It is a way for humans to express themselves. Dance encompasses so much of life that it is hard to define what it is. Everything is so inter-related and everything can lead to dance. According to Webster's dictionary dance is to move the body and the feet in rhythm, ordinarily to music. I find this to be a very narrow minded approach to what dance is. Dance is not always easily put into words. People connect to dance in different ways. I decided to focus on one aspect of dance that can relate to many parts of life. Dance is a way for people to express their emotions. By expressing emotion one is living, communicating, and defining culture.

To me dance is a form of emotional expression and dancing is a way of turning emotion into movement. When I dance my emotion drives me to dance. An internal spark is ignited and causes me to move. When I am unable to dance I go through an internal struggle. My emotions get bottled up and I go through inner turmoil with myself. When I was a child my mother enrolled me in dance classes. No matter what I would always go to dance class. I loved to dance. It was not until I was older that I realized what drove me to dance classes all those years. I was the youngest of three and always considered the baby. My older siblings demand a lot of attention. Since I was the youngest what I had to say held little merit in family conversations. My ideas and feelings were viewed as juvenile. Reflecting back on that I discovered why I loved dance class so much. It allowed me to express my feelings and let my movements speak for

me. Dancing was my emotional outlet. No matter what I knew I could handle anything life through at me as long as I could dance.

This was challenged a little less than a year ago. I was unable to dance for 6 weeks due to stomach surgery. I was a wreck. I had no way to express myself. I am not good in expressing myself through words. I needed dance and I needed the release it gave me. I was frustrated with life and emotionally unstable. It is through this experience that I realized dance is truly an expression of emotion. I had danced all the way up until I went in to surgery. Dance gave me a way to let go of my feeling and accept what my body was about to go through. Dance allowed me connect with my body on a personal level. As soon as I was healed enough to dance I danced. I found dancing sped up my healing process not physically but emotionally. I was able to let go of bottled up emotion and for that I was a happy person. Dance allows people to let go of reality and live in the moment. It gives them a safe way to express themselves without interference of someone telling them they are wrong. Dance is an abstract means of expression using movement. Dance is the desire to express ones emotions, thoughts, or feelings through movement.

To move is a natural human function. Everyone moves for without it humans would not be alive. To dance is to move but to move is not necessarily to dance. "Dance is distinguished from everyday movements because its intention is expressive beyond the mere boundary of everyday life" (Judy Scalan). Everyone has the ability to dance but those who choose to use it as a form of expression are truly dancing. Expression is a human function but the way one chooses to do it varies. Dance is a way to communicate emotions without words. Our mind gives us words for our feelings and

dancing gives us a way to express them. "Much can be said in movement that cannot be expressed in words" (Jonas 23).

This desire to express oneself through movement is not only seen in themselves but it is reflected in other people. I have seen dancers' emotions evolve throughout dance class. A good example of these came when a dance teacher of mine lost her father. Even with sadness in her heart she still came to teach class. She said that dancing makes her happy and she could not imagine being anywhere else. She needed to dance to release her emotions. Before class her face was washed out and depressing but after class her liveliness came back. It looked as if she could face the world. Dance was her way of grieving. She was able to let go of her feelings and move on with her life.

I have heard many dancers say "I dance therefore I am." It is only through understanding that dance is an expression of emotion that this quote takes on meaning. Emotion is a part of being alive. No one is able to go through life without feeling. One cannot be alive without emotion and one cannot feel emotion without being alive. Since it's natural to feel emotions and dance is expression of emotion, if you dance you are alive.

Movement comes from a person's desire to express their internal rhythm. This internal rhythm is your heartbeat. People are always telling me to "listen to your heart," "do what your heart is telling you to do," and "what is your heart feeling because feelings are never right or wrong." The heart is associated with emotions. One follows their heart by acting on these emotions. Example of this would be a man in love proposing to his girlfriend. Love is the emotion he is feeling and the act of proposing is the movement he uses to express his emotion. The emotional connection this couple feels can be interpreted into dance. "It's [dance] your pulse, it's your heartbeat, it's your breathing.

It's the rhythm of your life. It's the expression in time and movement of happiness and joy and sadness and energy. It's a venting of energy. It's extraordinary and that's common to all the cultures and it's common to all individuals" (Jacques D' Amboise/ Exley). Though this emotional impulse is common, it is also an individualistic form of expression. Each person can choose how to use their body to express themselves. Dance is just one way that people have the opportunity to carry out expression through movement.

"Dance is patterned and rhythmic bodily movements, usually performed to music, that serve as a form of communication or expression" (Encarta online concise). The human body itself is the instrument that dances but it is the human spirit that drives the body to dance. The body is just the instrument it is the spirit that goes out and touches others. A person's soul is what tells them how to move. Each body has limitations and can only move a certain way but their spirit makes it possible for them to move the best way they can. "Spirit makes motion emotional. No spirit, no dance" (Lady Walquer). Anyone can move and call it dance but one is not dancing until their spirit is initiating the movement. A movement is just movement but movement is dancing when the movement has an emotional feel to it.

All humans are effected are effected by the world around us that is why, "a great dance is literally and figuratively "breath taking," because it makes the spectator feel in his body the creative experience of the dancer in all its effects" (Martha Graham-A dancer's world). Not everyone is blessed with the ability to dance. So a dancer can provide an emotion outlet for the audience. A dancer has the power to evoke emotions in others. A dance can touch an audience member's soul and can release their emotions

from just watching. Dance can move a person so much that it can bring up feelings and memories that they have forgotten about. In this way dance is healing because it can help people get in touch with their emotions and deal with their problems. I am seen plenty of dances that have effected me emotionally. A dancer is truly dancing when they connect with the audience. "In good dancing, self become submerged as the dancers awareness becomes concentrated in the dance, only thus is she able to take the audience into the dance with her. (Fraleigh 23).

Dance is an element that encompasses all cultures. Dance is a social activity that is non-biased. If one has the desire to dance then they will dance. In dancing people socialize with a wide variety of people from a wide variety of cultures. "Dance is a form of participation in culture and away of creating culture" (Fraleigh 23). Dance expresses a cultures values and beliefs. People dance in celebration, in mourning, and as storytelling. It gives many people the ability to connect to their heritage and find their roots. It gives them meaning to who they are. Culture can also be seen as an emotion and dance as expressing that emotion. At times people feel pride in their country and express that pride in dance. Similarly, the Indian rain dance express desires and need for rain because rain nourishes the crops. Therefore people dance to express the emotions of the culture.

Internally the form of dance reflects specific aspects of culture. What a certain culture or group believed in or valued at the specific time inspired the dance form. Dance is a reflection on a culture so each form of dance initially came from different avenues of life. Differences in life styles also influences dance. All dance forms are unique because they emerged from distinctive backgrounds. All types of movements and dance have different intentions. Emotions drive people to create dances that express their culture.

One has to feel a powerful connection to a subject to create a dance that will reflect their culture. Reflecting on emotions is what causes dance styles to develop and new ones to emerge. Twyla Tharp created dance that was an expression of nature and what emotion nature provoked in her. Sacred dance is a form of expressing ones emotions to God. Even though different dance forms are unique there is one thing that combines them all.

With many different cultures in the world it is often difficult to cross communication barriers. Fortunately there is one common element that all cultures share. That is the language of dance. It does not matter where you are from because everyone one feels the same emotions and those emotions can be expressed through dance. A person from Japan can understand a person dancing from Norway. This is because emotions and feelings are cross-cultural. Happiness still comes of as happiness through movement and sadness can still be understood through movement no matter where you are. The language of dance is universal. All styles of dance use gestural movement and facial expressions, which happen to stem from emotion. Movement is inside all of us and when we dance we wish to communicate our emotions to others.

Dance is not just a way to communicate culturally but also individualistically. "I dance because it is my easiest way of communicating. I find it very difficult to talk...I find it very difficult to communicate verbally as directly as I can when I dance" (Lyle 103). I find this to be true for me. Since I have a hard time using words to express what I am feeling I tend to not say anything. This is because I do not have a very elaborate vocabulary. Dancing gives me away to tell people what I feel. Look at people with mental disorders or physical handicaps. They might not be able to verbally communicate with you but when they dance you can tell if they are happy or sad. Sometimes words are

to literal and confining to express emotion. In dance you can expand words and emotions. There are no barriers or documentation dictating your emotions. "I can't say what I need to say as a human being. Dance has its own vocabulary" (Jamison 143). Dance is away for a person to directly communicate their emotions through movement.

Dance is movement. Movement which comes in many forms. Movement keeps us as humans alive. It allows us to experience life and learn how to adapt to changes. It gives us the ability to communicate not only with sound but also with movement. Movement that can spark a persons internal being. This being is an internal rhythm. A rhythm that stirs up emotions in all humans. Emotion gives meaning to life. Without it life would be boring and nonexistent. Movement initiates emotion as well as emotion initiates movement. Without movement we as humans would have no spirit. Spirit is driven by emotions and emotions drive us to dance.

Even though dance is a broad subject it still has distinct characteristics. The expression of these characteristics depends on how a dancer connects to dance. I see dance as an emotional expression and therefore I define it as that. On the other hand a different dancer could just view dance as entertainment and define it as that. In life everyone has his or her own interpretation of what things are. No one can tell them their wrong because that is just their own individualistic outlook. Life is not black or white and neither is dance. One thing I do know is that dance comes out of ones desire to express themselves be it emotionally, figuratively, or literally. The drive to express emotions comes from the heart. To be human is to be alive. To feel emotions is to be human. To move is to be human so to express emotions through movements is human. Expressive movement is dance so to dance is to be alive.



# Performance Reflection

# Performance Reflection

Looking back on my performance my heart smiles and my body is filled with elation. I am so ecstatic about my performance. To be truthful I do not remember performing. It seems like a faded memory. I danced in a dream world and did not wake up till I was done performing. I cannot remember if I pointed my toes or nailed my turns and I do not care. When I danced I was in my zone. I was completely oblivious to my surroundings. I was not as nervous as I thought I would be and when I danced all my cares were lost. I danced as if I was the only one in the room. I danced from my heart. Throughout my dance I was picturing all my loved ones and I was dancing for all of them.

I danced especially for my parents because this is the moment that all their money, support, and love lead too. For without them I would not have this opportunity and for that I am eternally grateful. For my best friends who mean the world to me and without them this dance would not exist. I danced for my close friends who have been so supportive of me so they might feel my love for them. I danced for all my teachers who through all the years have molded me and watched me grow as a dancer. To make all the people I love proud and feel partly responsible for the dancer I have become. For without these peoples love and influence in my life I would not be the dancer or the woman I am today.

I can sit here racking my brain to try and remember how I danced but I cannot. I do not remember performing which only leads to one conclusion. I was full of passion and my whole being became one with the piece. I was in the moment mind, body, and spirit. Nothing was distracting me. The outside world seemed to stop for that moment

just so I might dance. When I ended the piece and came back to reality my body was mesmerized. I had never experienced such a feeling before in my life. I just knew I did it. I cannot explain what I felt. I wish I could, so I might share this exotic feeling with others. It will be kept as an internal and personal feeling that I will cherish. The first person I saw when I came too was a very close sorority sister of mine. As I focused on her I noticed she was crying. The thing about her is that she is the type of person who is hard to break. At that moment I realized that my dance affected people the way I hoped it would.

I never judge how I dance until I get audience feedback. If the audience enjoyed it and felt connected to it then I did my job. Well, everywhere I turned people were coming up to me telling me how wonderfully I did. It was not just my friends but random people. Now my thought on this is that people would not say it unless they meant it. I truly believe this because I do not say things I do not mean and would expect people to do the same. Why would someone waste their breath to say something they did not mean? With this in mind I was even more overcome with joy. Part of my unwritten intention was to leave a lasting impression on the audience. It would have been worth it even if I only affected one person. But, to affect that many people was a blessing. To me a dancer can only judge how well they did on the reaction of the audience. The reaction I received was so much more than I had expected. Not only is the audience left impressionable but I too am left with an indelible mark.

As a whole I am really proud of the work I did not just the performance but all that led up to it. I have to say that I could not of done it without Luretta. She saw the potential in me and never let me get away with doing anything less than my best. She

kept me on track and guided me to the end result. She was just the perfect amount of supervision I needed. She let me blossom and grow when I needed to. Yet, when I was a little confused or off the path she picked me up and put me right back on. Without her I my dance would not be the wondrous creation it ended up being and for that I am thankful to her.

Looking back this process has been a struggle. A struggle for me to get motivated and get my heart into choreographing this piece. I was not thrilled with having to have intent to my dance or a mentor. I thought those things would take away from my enjoyment of just dancing. I wanted to be completely free to soar out on my own two wings. When reality hit I realized I cannot do this by myself and I needed a second pair of wings to fly with me as I go along my journey. What I have found is a new love and appreciation for dance. It is through difficulty that one learns the most. I learned that no matter how much I think I know there is always another point of view that broadens my view. I learned that my experiences can only be what I want to make of them. If I do not try then I will never know.

In life learning to ask for help is harder than receiving it. I like to be independent and feel that I can figure things out by myself. In this case I came to the conclusion I do not mind asking for help when I know its an area I am weak in but I do when I feel it is an area I should know well. I get a little snobbish when it comes to dance. I tend to think that I know a lot about dance. Then I am reminded that to be truly knowledgeable in dance I must keep learning and asking questions. This process led not only exploration as a dancer but as a human.

To be human is to be accepting of ones faults and I not only had to accept my faults as a human but also as a dancer. I had to work past my insecurities and absorb all that was presented to me. It did not matter how uncomfortable I felt at times because I needed to get work done. As a human I learned that I can not get by without help and getting involved in my surroundings. Coming back to school I just wanted to get out. I did not want to bother with making friends or reconnect with old friends. What I found is that life was easier and more enjoyable when I was surrounded by friends. Life is worth living when you share it with people you love.



# Career Plots

# A Career Reflection Sheet

## 1. What am I most excited about after graduation?

Going out into the dance world and seeing what it has to offer me. Trying many things and experiencing many things.

## 2. What I am most afraid of?

Never trying and never knowing if I could of made it. Not knowing what to expect or what lies ahead of me.

## 3. Everything everyone has told me I should do after I graduate:

Teach/ choreograph professionally or for schools or cheerleading teams/ coach cheerleading/ audition for music videos/ do musical theater/ open a pre-school.

## 4. Everything I wish—but think can not come true:

I would like to everything stated above. I believe anything is possible as long as I want it and try hard enough for it. If it does not come true then it was not meant for me to do it. I want to try it all that whatever happens is meant to happen. I do not believe any of it will not come true. If I think negatively then things will not come true.

## How to Prepare:

### 1. What have I actually started to put in motion:

I researched some talent agents. Looked for good places to take dance classes. Got names of photographers for headshots.

### 2. Personal and professional contacts:

Various dancers in many avenues of dance that used to dance at the old studio I used to work for. Many people in the industry my dance teacher has connected me with. Some friends of mine that have made a name for themselves in the dance world.

### 3. Where will I live:

Where I live presently, in Marina Del Rey.

### 4. Do I have a financial cushion?

My parents will help support me and I will also get a temp job or a job working during the night hours.

### 5. What will be my financial obligations?

Rent, gas, car repairs, utilities, car insurance, health/dental insurance, groceries, personal necessities, anything extra (i.e. clothing, entertainment, etc.)

### 6. Do I have a car and will I need it?

Yes- I will most defiantly need it.



**7. What else will I need?**

I stated most of it in question #5

**8. Where will I study dance?**

The Edge, Moro Landis, Debbie Reynolds, and any other studio that offers classes I might enjoy.

**9. Geography?**

None of them are necessarily close but I will just commute. Plus I have friends that live closer to them that have offer me a place to crash out if need be.

**10. Dance support system:**

Teachers/ staff from my studio back home. Friends all around that have made it in various avenues of the dance industry.

**11. LMU support mechanism:**

Judy and any of the other dance faculty I feel close to. My sorority sisters.

**12. Alumni contacts:**

None from the dance department but, many sorority sisters.

**13. Other support systems:**

My FAMILY, FRIENDS, and my STUDIO FAMILY

#### **14. Practical jobs:**

Teach dance and school level, child/ teen counselor, social worker,  
cheerleading coach, choreographer for various things non-professional

#### **15. Desired jobs:**

Dance professional (movies, music videos, TV), dance on Broadway or in a  
touring show, dance on cruise ships, coach cheerleading, teach dance

#### **Professional Materials:**

Resume

Photos

Portfolio

Letters of Reference

## The Career Plot

1) Resumes, headshots, letters are enclosed.

2) Report on visits to the career center.

I went to the career center to take the strong inventory test to see what other careers are fitting for my personality type. This was to give me an idea of what jobs might interest me incase my dancing career falls through.

3) Report on information about graduate schools.

I am not planning to go to graduate school. If I do decide to go back to school it would be to get my teaching credential and for that I will go to National University in San Jose.

4) Report on information bout companies for which I might audition.

I am not really interested in dancing in a company. If I find one when I am out in the dance world that catches my eye then I might consider auditioning.

5) My skills in dance include:

I have been exposed to various styles of dance so I will be able to adapt to most styles presented to me. I am quick to pick up and remember combinations. I am very knowledgeable in tap and jazz. My personality is such that I get along with almost everyone and I am easy to work with. I constantly work hard and push myself to give more. I have been told that when I dance my facials draw attention to me.

**6) My challenges in dance include:**

I am not extremely flexible and my strength could be increased. There are also some technical aspects of dance that I need to work on and become comfortable with.

Being short poses a challenge because I do not have a long leg line that most people are looking for.

**7) How might I address my challenges:**

I will constantly taking classes and conditioning my body. I plan to stick to a steady work out schedule. Take extra time to work on aspects of dance that my body is not comfortable with.

**8) Where will my skills work best for me:**

I think my skills will help me when I am auditioning. They will also help me keep and stay in good standing when I get a job. My personality will help because I enjoy meeting new people and that networking could get me a job in the future. My facials could leave lasting impressions on people.

**9) My other skills include:**

I have a strong business sense. I enjoy teaching and helping others. I have a good ear for music and appreciate all types of music. I love learning about all the aspects of dance.

**10) My other challenges include:**

I am a huge procrastinator and at times I have very little patience. At times I am too much of a perfectionist and that interferes with me accomplishing things. I tend to

get really frustrated at myself if I do not pick things up quickly and execute them perfectly. I am an extremely blunt and honest person, which at times can work against me.

**11) My other skills are relevant to my career in the following ways.**

I am a very determined person and am willing to try anything. I have a lot of motivation towards any goal I wish to pursue. I do not give up easily and am willing to adapt to any situation.

**11) My challenges can be addressed in the following ways.**

The first step is realizing I have a problem. I will work on them and constantly be aware of them. When presented with a situation that stirs up my challenges I will take a breath and try to handle it differently.

**12) My career plans:**

During the spring and summer of 2001 I am going to take dance classes at night from a studio that is well known in the dance world. Hopefully I can make connections through the studio. I am going to work either in retail or as waitress to make money to support myself. During the day I am going to audition everywhere possible. I am going to try breaking into the business without help but eventually, I plan to get an agent. This will be my time to test the waters and get myself noticed by as many people as I can. Hopefully somewhere around fall 2001 I will start getting dance and commercial jobs.

The next three years I plan to continue my dancing career. I would like to break into television and movie industry. I am not expecting to become famous just

make a living doing what I love. After about two years I am going to re-evaluate my life and see if I really want to pursue a professional dance career. If not then I will move back to San Jose and teach dance at night while teaching school during the days. I have a job teaching dance at my old studio waiting for me. I also see myself as a cheerleading coach and choreographing for various things. If I choose to stay and pursue a dance career I will keep taking classes and auditioning. To make myself more marketable I plan to take acting classes and voice lessons. I will also try out for some musical theater.

Five years down the road I will hopefully be engaged to a wonderful and supportive man. I will still teaching dance at night while teaching school during the days. Around this time I will be looking into owning my own dance studio. If time presents itself I plan to do some musical theater as well as take voice lessons.

All these plans depend on if I make it or not. The next couple of years are for me just to spread my wings and fly. The only reason I am staying in LA to pursue a dance career is just to say I tried. I feel that I am young and should experience life as much as possible and enjoy all it has to offer. If I never tried I would always wonder what if and that is what regret are made of. I want to have professional experiences I can use to help out students when I teach. The more knowledge and background I have the more I have to offer my students. If for some strange reason I do make it in Hollywood then these plans could turn out differently. No matter what I will eventually move back home and teach dance.

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# Bibliography

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